

REQUIEM FOR MY LOVELY

BRIAN D. KANGAS AND RACHEL N. CASSIDY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Thirty-five years ago, B.F. Skinner (1976) lamented a decreasing trend in the prevalence of cumulative records in the *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior* (*JEAB*). The editorial began with the two memorable lines, “Evidently we have not long to wait for an issue of *JEAB* without a single cumulative record! I shall not miss the records so much as the kinds of experiments that could scarcely be reported without them” (p. 218). The first issue without a record did indeed arrive a few years later, in March of 1979, and is now a common occurrence. So common, in fact, that although Skinner would not live to see it, 2002 marked the first (and only to date) entire year of *JEAB* without a single cumulative record.

Figure 1 presents the cumulative number of articles appearing in *JEAB* containing at least one cumulative record from 1958–2010. As the figure shows, after almost two decades of a relatively high constant rate, a negative acceleration began around the time of Skinner’s prescient eulogy. Several possible explanations of this decline have been offered in a recent historical account of the technology (Lattal, 2004); nevertheless, *JEAB* continues to thrive beyond one of its initial objectives as an outlet for behavior analysts having difficulty getting

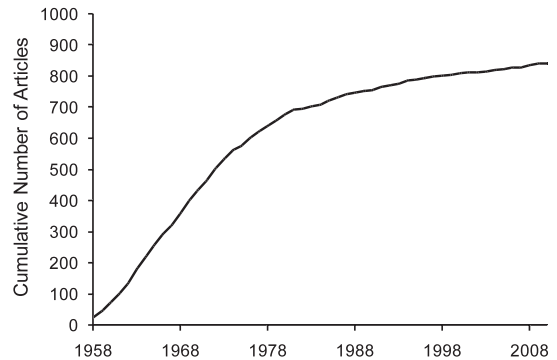


Fig. 1. Cumulative number of articles appearing in *JEAB* containing at least one cumulative record from 1958–2010.

their records published elsewhere (see Herrnstein, 1987; Skinner, 1987).

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Correspondence concerning this article can be directed to Brian D. Kangas, at the Department of Psychology, University of Florida, P.O. Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611 (e-mail: kangas@ufl.edu).
doi: 10.1901/jeab.2011.95-269